

Message Text

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 110154 TOSEC 110821

EXDIS:FOR SECRETARY FROM ATHERTON AND LEWIS THRU SISCO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGSPFOR, UNSC, ME

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM: TACTICS FOR THE SECURITY
COUNCIL MEETING ON WEST BANK DEVELOPMENTS (S/S NO.7609409)

FOLLOWING IS A MEMO OUTLINING POSSIBLE OPTIONS FOR US IN
THE CURRENT SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE ON THE WEST BANK. WE
THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR YOU TO CONSIDER THESE IDEAS
IN PREPARATION FOR YOUR TALKS WITH GOVERNOR SCRANTON UPON
YOUR RETURN.

THE PROBLEM:

AT EGYPT'S REQUEST, THE SECURITY COUNCIL HAS BEEN MEETING
THIS PAST WEEK ON THE SITUATION ON THE WEST BANK. THE
DEBATE THUS FAR HAS SEEN VERY STRONG CHARGES LEVELED BY THE
ARABS AGAINST ISRAEL'S OCCUPATION, AND A STOUT DEFENSE BY
AMBASSADOR HERZOG. PURSUANT TO YOUR INSTRUCTIONS, WE HAVE
BEEN ABLE TO POSTPONE CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION. HOW-
EVER, FAIRLY SOON WE EXPECT TO BE FACED WITH TWO PROBLEMS:
-- WHETHER TO SPEAK IN THE DEBATE AND WHAT TO SAY-
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WHETHER TO SPEAK IN THE DEBATE AND WHAT TO SAY,
-- WHETHER ACTIVELY TO COOPERATE IN DEVELOPING A RESOLUTION
WHICH WE WOULD NOT HAVE TO VETO.

DISCUSSION:

WE FIRST LEARNED FROM A CAIRO PRESS STORY OF EGYPT'S

INTENTION TO ASK THE SECURITY COUNCIL FOR A DEBATE ON WEST BANK DEVELOPMENTS. WE SUBSEQUENTLY RECEIVED AMBASSADOR EILTS' REPORT OF THE MEETING IN WHICH FAHMY TOLD EILTS OF EGYPT'S INTENTION AND SAID HE HOPED EGYPT COULD COOPERATE CLOSELY WITH THE US DURING THE DEBATE AND AVOID A US VETO. IF WE FEEL WE MUST VETO, FAHMY SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IN ADVANCE SO THAT HE CAN TOUGHEN THE RESOLUTION.

EGYPT'S PURPOSE IN STIMULATING A SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING SEEMS THE PRODUCT OF A NUMBER OF FACTORS HAVING TO DO WITH INTER-ARAB POLITICS, INCLUDING COMPETITION WITH SYRIA AS CHAMPION OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS. WHILE THE OTHER ARABS HAVE BEEN PREDICTABLY TOUGH IN THEIR CRITICISM OF ISRAEL IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL, A BETTER INDICATION OF THEIR TRUE FEELINGS REGARDING EGYPT'S ROLE WAS A SYRIAN AND JORDANIAN OBJECTION TO EGYPT'S BEING GIVEN A PERMANENT SEAT AT THE COUNCIL TABLE, A SEAT TO WHICH EGYPT ORDINARILY WOULD HAVE BEEN ENTITLED AS COMPLAINANT.

ISRAEL'S REACTION TO THE EGYPTIAN INITIATIVE WAS ONE OF SUSPICION AS TO MOTIVATION TOGETHER WITH THE CHARGE THAT BY BRINGING THE COMPLAINT EGYPT HAS GONE BACK ON THE SPIRIT OF THE SINAI ACCORD BY ENGAGING IN DIPLOMATIC HARASSMENT OF ISRAEL. ISRAEL HAS URGED US TO MAKE CLEAR WE WILL VETO ANY RESOLUTION, EVEN IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT THAT IT DOES NOT GO BEYOND OUR POSITION AS STATED IN THE SCRANTON SPEECH, ON THE GROUNDS THAT SECURITY COUNCIL AGITATION OF THIS ISSUE HARMS FUTURE PEACE PROSPECTS AND IS BEING USED BY THE ARABS FOR SELF-SERVING
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PURPOSES.

AS FAR AS THE US IS CONCERNED, THE FOLLOWING FACTORS SHOULD SHAPE OUR STRATEGY IN THE COUNCIL:

-- UNDOF RENEWAL: WE SHOULD AVOID A SITUATION IN WHICH SYRIA WILL FEEL COMPELLED TO ACHIEVE MORE IN THE CONTEXT OF UNDOF RENEWAL THAN EGYPT WILL ACHIEVE IN THE COURSE OF THE CURRENT DEBATE. ISRAEL HAS STATED FIRMLY THAT IT WILL ACCEPT NO CONDITIONS TO UNDOF RENEWAL.

-- LEBANON: WHILE THE CONNECTION IS INDIRECT, THE

VARIOUS INTER-ARAB POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS WHICH LED

TO THE CURRENT SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING COULD BE EXACERBATED IN THE COURSE OF PUTTING TOGETHER A RESOLUTION. FURTHER INTENSIFICATION OF THESE INTER-ARAB RIVALRIES WILL WORK AGAINST ANY EASING OF THE LEBANESE CRISIS.

-- THE SITUATION OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES: THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT IS CURRENTLY REVIEWING ITS POLICY ON WEST BANK SETTLEMENTS. THE VERY FACT OF A SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE AT THIS TIME WILL TEND TO UNITE ISRAEL BEHIND A HAWKISH POLICY. IF THE US TAKES A POSITION IN THE DEBATE WHICH ISRAEL SEES AS NOT SUPPORTIVE OF ITS POSITION, THIS WOULD STRENGTHEN HAWKISH TENDENCIES EVEN FURTHER; IT WOULD ALSO WEAKEN PRIME MINISTER RABIN'S POSITION.

-- US RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL AND WITH THE ARABS: WE DO NOT WANT TO CONTRIBUTE FURTHER TO THE ISRAELI FEELING THAT THE US IS ON AN ANTI-ISRAELI COURSE; NOR DO WE WANT THEM TO THINK THAT THE US IS BACKING AWAY FROM THE POSITION ON OCCUPIED TERRITORIES STATED BY GOVERNOR SCRANTON LAST MARCH. AS TO THE ARABS, THEY SHOULD NOT END UP WITH A CONVICTION THAT THE SECURITY COUNCIL CAN BE USED BY EACH ARAB STATE IN TURN TO MANIPULATE THE US TO ARAB ADVANTAGE.

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OPTIONS:

A. ON THE RESOLUTION:

(1) WE CAN COOPERATE WITH FAHMY BY TELLING HIM WHAT A RESOLUTION WOULD HAVE TO CONTAIN IN ORDER TO ALLOW US TO ABSTAIN, OR, IF WE JUDGE THAT A VETO IS INEVITABLE, BY TELLING FAHMY IN ADVANCE SO THAT HE CAN TABLE A TOUGHER RESOLUTION.

PRO:

-- IT WOULD SHOW OUR WILLINGNESS AT THE UN TO SEEK TO ARRIVE AT AN ACCEPTABLE RESOLUTION AND COUNTER THE CHARGE THAT WE AUTOMATICALLY VETO ANYTHING HAVING TO DO WITH THE PALESTINIANS.

-- IT WOULD DEMONSTRATE OUR WILLINGNESS TO STAND BY THE EGYPTIANS IN COUNTER-BALANCING THE SYRIANS AS DEFENDERS OF THE PALESTINIANS AND SHOW THAT EGYPT DERIVES BENEFITS FROM ITS PRO-AMERICAN POLICIES.

CON:

-- INTER-ARAB POLITICAL DYNAMICS INEVITABLY WILL FORCE A RADICAL RESOLUTION. IN THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE SHOULD NOT LET EGYPT AND OTHERS THINK THAT WE WILL COOPERATE IN BRINGING ABOUT OUR OWN ISOLATION IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

-- THE SYRIANS WOULD EXPECT THE SAME KIND OF COOPERATION IN MEETING THEIR REQUIREMENTS FOR UNDOF RENEWAL.

-- BY THUS SUPPORTING EGYPT, IT COULD COMPLICATE OUR RELATIONS WITH SYRIA IN LEBANON.

-- IF HOWEVER, EGYPT MANAGES TO COME UP WITH A MODERATE RESOLUTION AND WE DO END UP ABSTAINING, WE WOULD INEVITABLY ALIENATE THE ISRAELIS, HURT RABIN'S POSITION AND STRENGTHEN ISRAELI HAWKS.
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-- IT WOULD MAKE IT THAT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT FOR ISRAEL TO DEVELOP A MORE FORTHCOMING POLICY TOWARDS THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.

(2) WE CAN TELL EGYPT THAT WE CANNOT COOPERATE BECAUSE OF CONSEQUENCES FOR MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS AND FOR UNDOF RENEWAL. ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE RESOLUTION WILL BE EXTREME, WE WOULD NOT GET INVOLVED IN NEGOTIATIONS BUT WOULD EXPECT TO VETO.

PRO:

-- WE WOULD NOT BE OPEN TO ACCUSATIONS BY ISRAEL OR BY SYRIA THAT WE HAVE COLLUDED WITH EGYPT.

-- WE WOULD AVOID BEING A FOOTBALL BETWEEN EGYPT AND SYRIA.

-- WE WOULD HAVE A FREER HAND IN JUDGING WHATEVER RESOLUTION EMERGED FROM THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS.

-- SINCE EGYPT DID NOT CONSULT US IN ADVANCE ON ITS INITIATIVE, WE SHOULD AVOID CREATING THE IMPRESSION THEY CAN FORCE OUR COOPERATION.

CON:

-- THE INITIATIVE IS FAHMY'S AND HE WILL BE DISAPPOINTED IN OUR FAILURE TO COOPERATE.

-- IT WILL DENY US THE POSSIBILITY OF TYING EGYPT

TO A PLEDGE OF DEVELOPING A MODERATE RESOLUTION ON
WHICH WE CAN ABSTAIN.

B. ON THE SPEECH:

(1) GOVERNOR SCRANTON COULD LARGELY REPEAT THE
STATEMENT HE MADE LAST MARCH.

PRO:
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-- THE MARCH SPEECH WAS WIDELY HERALDED IN THE ARAB
WORLD. ITS REPETITION WOULD ALSO BE POPULAR.

-- IT IS A CLEAR STATEMENT OF US POLICY AND ITS
REITERATION WOULD HELP REMIND THE ISRAELIS THAT WE
ARE CONSISTENT IN OUR POSITION.

CON:

-- OUR POLICY STANDS IN ANY EVENT. THE ARABS AND
THE ISRAELIS KNOW THAT.

-- ITS REITERATION IN DETAIL WOULD REWARD THE EGYPTIANS
FOR CONVENING THE SECURITY COUNCIL, WHEN IT SERVES
NO US PURPOSE.

-- IT WOULD ALSO AGAIN UPSET ISRAEL, AND ISRAELI
SUPPORTERS IN THE US, AT A TIME WHEN RABIN IS FACING
SOME HARD DECISIONS ON THE WEST BANK.

(2) REMAIN SILENT DURING THE DEBATE BUT IN EXPLANATION
OF VOTE REFER TO GOVERNOR SCRANTON'S STATEMENT IN
MARCH AND SAY THAT THIS CONTINUES TO BE US POLICY.

PRO:

-- OUR SILENCE DURING THE MAIN DEBATE WILL BE UNDER-
STOOD BY THE ARABS AS A DEMONSTRATION OF OUR UN-
WILLINGNESS TO BE MANIPULATED. THE UK INTENDS
REMAINING SILENT AND IS URGING FRANCE AND ITALY TO
FOLLOW THE SAME COURSE.

-- AT THE SAME TIME, ALL PARTIES CONCERNED WILL BE
ADEQUATELY REMINDED THAT OUR POSITION HAS NOT CHANGED.

CON:

-- THE ARABS WILL FEEL THAT OUR FAILURE TO RESTATE
IN DETAIL OUR POSITION, COMBINED WITH OUR LIKELY VETO,
WILL CONSTITUTE A REGRESSION FROM THE POSTURE WE TOOK
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IN MARCH.

-- THE ISRAELIS WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO THINK THAT THEIR
CRITICISM OF THE MARCH STATEMENT HAS HAD SOME EFFECT
ON US POLICY.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. ON THE RESOLUTION:

IO AND NEA RECOMMEND THAT YOU APPROVE OPTION 2-- THAT
WE DECLINE TO COLLABORATE WITH EGYPT IN DEVELOPING A
RESOLUTION, AND THUS NOT GET INVOLVED IN NEGOTIATIONS,
AND THAT WE WOULD PROBABLY EXPECT TO VETO.

APPROVE: DISAPPROVE:

B. ON THE SPEECH:

IO AND NEA RECOMMEND OPTION 2--THAT WE REMAIN SILENT
DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE WITH ONLY A BRIEF EXPLANATION
OF VOTE.

APPROVE: DISAPPROVE:

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CLEARANCES: NEA:ALATHERTON APPROVED BY:JJSISCO
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